

Incident Investigation time line (incident known as 'the fact')

Note: Compliance before 'the fact' will be considered when deemed necessary

Process stage	Actions	Procedures	Key requirements
IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH	Stop process	Organisation's Incident Policy procedures:	Save life if possible
	Protect others from harm	Should be in place before incident	Preserve evidence (do not look at CCTV during this phase)
AFTERMATH	First Aid	Relevant staff should be appropriately trained especially First Aiders & managers	Ensure relatives are protected from additional trauma via social media before visit from official representatives
	Injured person(s) to hospital or Removal of body(ies)	Include communication policy for: Workforce, families affected and media	Limit employee use of social media in immediate aftermath
	Communication with workforce	Usually responsibility of organisation	Follow organisation's Major Incident procedures
	Communication with families		Manage dissemination of incident information
	Final clean up		
Police	Assessment by: Police HSE Senior managers	Brief other employees	Avoid coming to conclusions before all evidence is assessed Be aware of effect of witness trauma Liaison between Police, HSE and senior managers Avoid blame culture, think about those affected by incident
	Record of incident: Photographs Written notes Eyewitness statements Other evidence	Interview witnesses Interview other relevant parties Interviews may be under caution Arrests if deemed necessary	Consider possibility of: Corporate Manslaughter General Negligence Manslaughter Homicide Foul Play Suicide Transfer of primacy to HSE if no breach of criminal law
HSE & HSL	Record of incident: Photographs Written notes Eyewitness statements Risk Assessments Safe Systems of Work Other evidence	After initial Police assessment	Clear documentation Evidence based decisions Individual witness interviews as soon as possible Objective set of non-leading witness interview questions Identify need for enforcement notices ASAP
		Issue Notices if necessary	
		Specialist interviews	
		Periodic 'fee for intervention' Invoices	

Whole process often takes two or three years

overlap incident dependent

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AFTER THE FACT			
HSE	Request for written submissions Assess all evidence Produce objective summary of: Facts Conclusions	Prepare report for HM Coroner if fatality Prepare report recommending prosecutions if deemed necessary	Clear documentation Evidence based decisions Identify H & S law breaches if applicable No HSE information to the media during this phase
Organisation	Avoid blame culture Learn from incident Co-operate with HSE Inspectors	Review Safe Systems of Work and RAs	Do not pressurise employees
Coroner's Court	Pre-Inquest Hearings Witness summonses Inquest PIPs	Public assessment of findings Opportunity for interested parties to speak Decision on cause of death	Assessments in the public domain for first time
Finish HSE/Police Investigations	Prosecution report Information Summons	By Approvals' Officer Information passed to defence lawyers	
Magistrates' Court	First Hearing Referral to Crown Court		Assessment of whether case should go to Crown Court
Crown Court	Preliminary Hearing Preparation for Trial/sentence Trial Sentence		